## Naval Officer Forecast Role of Air Power in the Far East 20 Years Ago

By Ben H. Pearse.

"The potential awfulness of air power in its relation to future political and national interest in the Far East has not yet been realized by American statesmen and naval minds. If they will stop and study this subject, it may come to them with a dull sickening thud."

The sickening thud, of course, has come as predicted, but this is no excerpt from one of the thousands of prognostications offered so freely by air power enthusiasts. It came years ago from the pen of a die-in-the-wool naval line officer who never piloted a plane, the late Rear Admiral William Freeland Fullam, whose one-man campaign for a "threeplane" navy, unfortunately, has long since been forgotten.

The occasion of Admiral Fullam's remarks was a vote in the British House of Commons, back in 1923, to authorize expenditure of from \$50,000,000 to \$100,-000,000 for the naval base at Singapore. Read them against the background of the events of the past few weeks, in-

with strong submarine and air forces. The air force will dominate.

fleet carried with it a greater number of planes than any one nation or all Pointing out that docks at Singapore

would be essential for these latter craft. he declared that "battleships would avail nothing" because "they cannot carry ships, he asserted, Japan could not attack a strong air fleet. "It must be perfectly plain," Admiral

Fullam wrote, "that . . . Japan could easily demolish the English base at Hong Kong unless England maintained an overwhelming air force and strong submarine fleet in that vicinity."

England's predicament in maintaining

"There is but one way a fleet can take he was advanced to the rank of rear adthe offensive today," he wrote, "together miral in December, 1914, 15 pilots and 11 planes made up all there was of naval aviation.

"England could not attack Japan, Of medium height, with a very erect China of Russia in the East unless her military bearing, Admiral Fullam was known as a strict disciplinarian. But for all his strictness, he was also allied nations could bring against her, known as a fair and a just man This would require many aircraft carriers with nothing of the martinet about and big merchant steamers converted him. He was a man of decided views, not averse to expressing them and backed water for no one. His plea for more air power stirred no more contention than did his oft maintained thesis that the Marine Corps had no many planes." Depending upon battle- place in the Navy, that sailors should be and actually were well enough trained to perform the duties normally carried out by the marines. He saw no reason why marines should be placed on board men of war as orderlies and guards. He felt that the bluejacket was just as well trained for these duties. He was a great admirer of the Marine Corps, but concluded it should be a separate unit to



Brig. Gen. William L. Mitchell, former assistant chief of the Army Air Service (left), and Rear Admiral William F. Fullam, U. S. Navy, retired, who witnessed together the aerial bombing of obsolete United States warships and the German battleship Ostfriesland off the East Coast in 1921-22. Both were outspoken advocates of air power.

the Southwest Pacific today:

"\* \* Strange to say, the Singapore project is strongly opposed by certain prominent English naval officers and strategists either as a useless expense to the Empire, or because they claim it should not be equipped to accommodate battleships simply for the reason that battleships could not safely go there and would be of no use if they did go! . . .

"The vote in the House of Commons and the arguments of Mr. Emery, the First Lord of the Admiralty, were no doubt based on the traditional belief that England's great battleships could make Singapore a base of operations in case England's interests in the East were threatened. . . ..

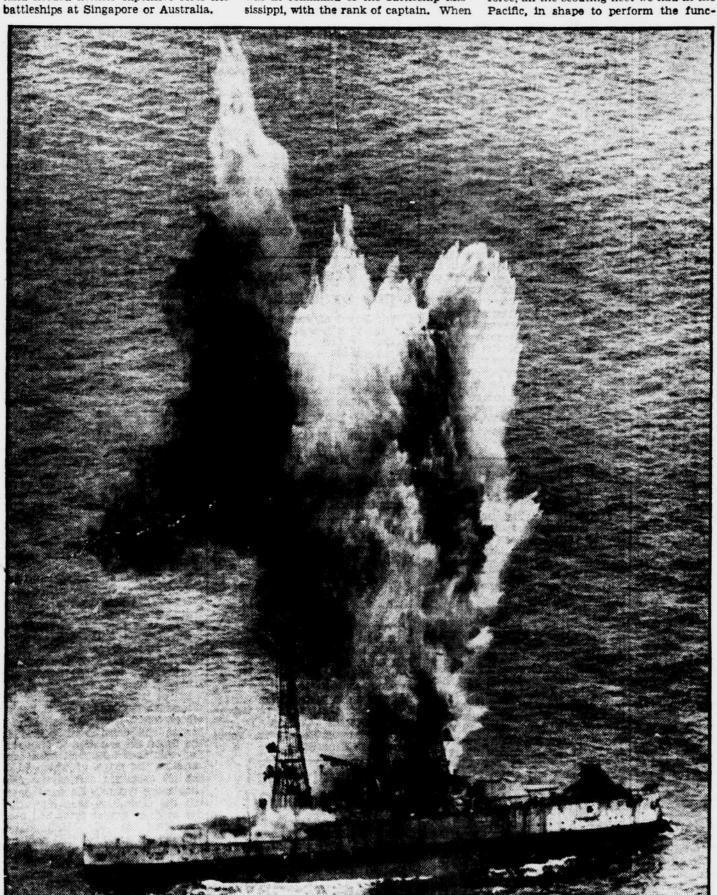
Reviewing this subject, Admiral Fullam declared that it was clear that England needed neither expensive forts nor

"The Philippines and Guam would fall to superior air power from nearby enemies. Battleships and forts would not protect them. Air force and submarines only could hold off an attack."

With these introductory excerpts to qualify Admiral Fullam as an expert, if not actually a prophet, it might be helpful to fix his place in the Navy's aeronautical development. Born in Pittsford, N. Y., October 20, 1855, he was appointed to the Naval Academy in 1873. When he graduated four years later, he was top man in his class and commander of the cadet battalion. About the time the Wright brothers were making their first successful flights at Kitty Hawk, N. C., he was in command of the sailing vessel Chesapeake. By the time the Army had bought its first plane, he was in command of the battleship Mis-

Wales and Repulse, the fall of Singapore East, he said, would be no worse than of the Sea," as they were called, and not enlisted personnel. It is not difficult to understand how an officer capable of harboring such a thought might run afoul of official disapproval sooner or later. and he did. The outbreak of the First World War found him in command of the Reserve Force of the Pacific Fleet, about as unimportant a command as could be found for a rear admiral.

With characteristic vigor, he set about getting his little fleet of ill-conditioned, undermanned auxiliaries ready for sea. His motto all through his life, and the one he impressed in the minds of all naval officers under him was, "Eternal vigilance is the price of our liberty." The declaration of war and presence of German raiders in the Pacific finally accomplished what repeated proddings had failed to do. He did get part of his force, all the scouting fleet we had in the



A phosphorus bomb striking the forward mast of the U.S. S. Alabama during the bombing demonstrations by the Army Air Service off Hampton Roads, Va., in 1921. The obsolete ship was later sunk with air bombs.



This photograph was not made at Pearl Harbor, but in Chesa peake Bay more than 20 years ago . . . Damage from aerial bombs during the bombing of the battleship U. S. S. Indiana, sunk off San Marcos Light, Chesapeake Bay, October 27-November 3, 1920. is being inspected by Brig. Gen. William L. Mitchell, former assistant Army Air Force chief, shown center, and Rear Admiral William F. Fullam, U. S. Navy, retired. Missiles of various sizes were used to determine effect. The picture shows the first deck blown off amidships.

tions to which he had been assigned. The Navy Cross he received was "for exceptionally meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility as commander of the Reserve Force, United States Pacific Fleet, and senior officer in command of the Pacific Station during the absence of the commander in chief in South Atlantic waters." But when the armistice was signed, it probably affected him in a way entirely different from what he had expected. He described it at an "Aviators' Armistice Dinner" given three years later and after his retirement, by the Aero Club of America in New York. Admiral Fullam was toastmaster. Among the speakers that evening were Brig. Gen. William Mitchell, Capt. H. C. Mustin, then assistant chief of the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics, and Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, America's leading World War

At this dinner Admiral Fullam said: "Three years ago, shortly after the armistice in 1918, when your humble servant, as commander of our naval forces in the Pacific, was one day ansels in the harbor of San Diego, Calif., the commanding officer of Rockwell Field, in celebration of the close of the World War, sent about 220 airplanes aloft at one time.

"It was a thrilling and imposing sight. The sky was fairly obscured by buzzing planes, cruising over the harbor in successive waves. . . . And these machines passed and repassed overhead for an hour or two . . until they landed . . . without a single mishap.

"Previous to this time I had given to the airplane what I considered to be its maximum role in war-that of a scout and an auxiliary force . . nothing had been done in the World War that would justify, in my estimation, the belief that it would seriously affect naval construction or naval strategy. But, we could not stand on the deck of a ship that day in San Diego Harbor without being forced, however reluctantly, to realize that a new era had dawned in naval science, high pitch. that a new weapon had appeared to upset all previously conceived ideas of the forces that would contribute most effectively to the maintenance of sea power in

future will be largely dependent upon control of the air, and that fleet which secures this control in future battles

From knowledge of what submarines War, and what airplanes were destined to accomplish in the future, he evolved his phrase, "Three-Plane Navy," which he described as a "mere voicing of the it is a fact, that the British fleet of 24 ideas that had lived in many men's battleships, nine battle cruisers, a score brains for many years."

Admiral Fullam was superintendent of the Naval Academy in 1914, and from the date of his retirement upon left a few German submarines to bring reaching the statutory age limit of 64 years in October, 1919, until his death in Washington in September, 1926, Ad- many thousands of anti-submarine craft miral Fullam devoted much of his time and his considerable energies toward heralding the new naval era. He was the next war? one of the organizers of the National congressional committees on the necessity for revamping naval policy.

His interest brought him into close contact with Gen. Mitchell and, although he did not advocate a separate air force, he gave the highest praise for the bombing demonstrations off the East Coast in 1921-2, during which the former German battleship, Ostfriesland, and obsolete American ships were sunk with air

"The statement is made in the interest of justice and truth," he told a congressional committee investigating the results of the demonstrations afterward, "that Gen. Mitchell has done more than any living man to demonstrate the power of air attack against the forces of our possible enemies and more than the General Board of the Navy and all of the admirals of the Navy combined." The report of the special Navy board

on the bombing demonstrations aroused the ire of the gray-haired admiral to a

"For four long months," he told the committee, "a special board of naval officers of high rank have investigated the air forces in modern war. Their report the air force and submarines without must look ahead from now on."

"Sea power, or fighting power, in the covers 80 pages. It begins with the era which it would have been quite useless of the galley and the oar and—in many weary pages-discusses matters that have no relation whatever to the condimust win, other things being approxi- tion that confronts our Navy today. To submarines that nearly won the World War alone against the navies of the had accomplished during the first World world, two pages are devoted. To air- carrying from 80 to 100 aircraft. They plane carriers, two paragraphs are youch-

> "No mention is made of the fact, for of fast cruisers, 100 destroyers and 5,000 anti-submarine craft, failed to command the sea around the British islands and Great Britain to the verge of starvation. . . . What sized fleet and how will be necessary to command the sea along the coasts of the United States in

"The report of this board, considering Aeronautic Association and is given its insistence upon the supremacy of the credit for its motto, "America First in battleship of the present type-cannot be the Air." He wrote articles, spoke at defended by arguments that are based countless dinners and testified before upon the logic of modern war. On the contrary, it . . . fails to remove the menace to our naval progress and fails to guard the safety of the United States as a nation."

## Witnessed Bombing Test. Because of his interest in air power,

he was invited to witness the bombing demonstrations. With Gen. Mitchell he went aboard some of the vessels during the progress of the demonstrations to inspect the damage caused by the various sized bombs used. The results impressed him deeply and led him up to another issue on which he differed radically with the naval authorities, the Washington disarmament conference. Far from shedding tears over the limitations of the conference, as did many of the naval experts of his day, Admiral Fullam declared it probably saved the Nation hundreds of millions of dollars to build up a navy for the war of the future instead of a war of the past.

"Had we continued to build 16 more battleships," he said, "our Navy would be more helpless than it is today because there would have been even less money subject of battleships, submarines and available at this time to supply it with have been looking back too long. We

against an up-to-date navy." The disarmament conference, of course, gave the Navy the two largest and most powerful aircraft carriers in the world, the Lexington and Saratoga, of about 35,000 tons each and capable of were converted from battle cruisers while under construction as a result of the conference limitations.

The proposal to increase the elevation of the battleship guns to obtain longer range he ascribed to the "malady that has afflicted us for the past four yearsbattleship-phobia and big-gun-itis."

"Command of the air," he thundered, "and nothing else can and will decide the issue of the next naval battle. Without it, the gun itself will be harmless. With it, the ranges beyond 20,000 yards will be quite unnecessary. Adding two miles to the range of our 16-inch guns is like increasing the range of a bow and arrow in competition with a Springfield

Naval thinking, Admiral Fullam conthe big ship and big gun which no longer commanded the sea.

"The best naval minds of all countries are agreed," he asserted, "that a dreadnaught fleet with guns of maximum power cannot approach a hostile coast; it cannot maintain a close blockade; it cannot safely venture more than 200 miles from its protected base; it cannot leave home at all unless it is guarded night and day from attack by airplanes and submarines. . . In short, the surface fleet no longer rules the oceans. Air and submarine power have dethroned the battleship. With these incontrovertible facts in mind, it is not difficult to outline a sound and modern naval policy for the United States.

"It is not argued that we should sink the battleships we now have. Not at all. We should retain them and make them efficient. But we must develop the forces above and below the surface fleet. We must have a three-plane Navy, a Navy above the surface, on the surface and below the surface. Otherwise, our fleet is completely useless in modern war. We

## JuliaWard Howe—Author of the Battle Hymn in the nursery back home in Boston she

THOSE DAYS."

This is the second of a series of articles about men who worked fought and died that America might live: men who made America great by contributing their own greatness to a country which was founded and has endured on the principle of life. liberty and the pursuit of happiness as the right of every man. The third article in the series will appear next Sunday.

By Alexander Woollcott. This is the story of a valiant and gracious woman to whom, in a dark hour in this Nation's history and in the unmapped half-world that lies between sleeping and waking, it was given to put down on paper certain words which have since been recognized as an imponderable and inalienable part of the national wealth, words which will last at least as

long as America does. Perhaps longer. Her name is Julia Ward Howe and the words made up certain stanzas which she sold to the Atlantic Monthly for \$5. To those stanzas the lavish editor of that magazine affixed the title: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and published them in his issue for February, 1862.

On July 4th of the year just passed, that hymn rang through the echoing crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, still miraculously standing after so much of London all about it had been battered to rubble. The occasion was the unveiling of a memorial tablet to Billy Fiske. the first American to give his life in this war. The singers were the still surviving flyers from his own squadron, and certain young American volunteers who had crossed the seas to make up the Eagle Squadron. Standing together in the candle-lit dusk of the crypt, this group, symbolic of Anglo-American courage, sang Billy Fiske to his rest with the words:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord: is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored."

Fragments of the hymn came back to our Quentin Reynolds when he was describing that service in an overseas broadcast addressed rather pointedly to Dr. Goebbels in Berlin. "He has sounded forth the trumpet that

shall never call retreat: is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat; Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him!

be jubilant, my feet!" sing "The Star Spangled Banner" or, fires of a hundred circling camps.

THERE WERE GIANTS IN singing it, at least made no impression that still lingered with Mr. Revnolds when he came to do his broadcast, it is not hard to guess why. That superb and stirring tune is the answer to a bandmaster's prayer and can quicken the heartbeat of any homesick American when he hears it wafted from the quarterdeck of any ship of ours at anchor in a distant harbor.

Ever since the turn of the century, and a little before that, the Army and Navy have made the playing of it obligatory on sundry occasions. After a multitudinous agitation lasting a third of a century, Congress, as recently as 1931, finally was badgered into declaring it our National Anchem. But just as Congress by merely calling it money, so it cannot turn any old song into a national anthem by decree. As a national anthem. "The Star Spangled Banner" has one disturbing defect. It cannot be sung. Its melody was written for the changing voice and has never been assaulted successfully by any man after the age of pub-

Unfortunately the Battle Hymn also has its own drawbacks as a National Anthem. Its tune, with or without the words Mrs. Howe wrote for it, was the song of one side in the bitter war between the States. From so much it will be seen that, just

wrote "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" and Francis Scott Key when he wrote "The It happened in this fashion. Mrs.

Ward of New York—was married to the famous Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe of Boston. As a youth Dr. Howe had served with the Greeks fighting for independence at Missolonghi and, returning to his native heath, had become the great pathfinder in the healing and education of the blind.

When, wretchedly equipped and inparson. James Freeman Clarke. From to evaporate before her day began. the window of her room at Willard's This time something moved her to



Julia Ward Howe From an old Daguerrotype,

All day and night recruits from the as Samuel Francis Smith did when he North and West poured into Washington and the scuff-scuff of their feet on the march provided the lullaby to which she Star Spangled Banner," so Mrs. Howe went to sleep. Always they sang the set her words to a tune already familiar. same song, "John Brown's Body," sang it to an old camp-meeting tune which Howe-she had been the lovely Julia the bandmaster of the 12th Massachusetts had adapted to marching. It was Dr. Clarke who suggested one day that Mrs. Howe might find new words for that tune.

"I have often prayed that I might," she said.

That night her prayer was answered. In the hour before sun-up, when the dawn showed gray at her window, she competently led, the raw, young Army of awoke with the verses forming themthe Potomac was taking shape, Dr. selves in her mind. Now such composi-Howe's neighbor, the Governor, sent him tion is the stuff that dreams are made of, off to Washington to look into the health and can vanish like the dew before the of the Massachusetts troops. Of course rising sun. More than once just a fan-

The darkness proved no hindrance, for the answer.

had learnd to do much of her writing as she sat on guard beside a cradle. So, without pausing to dress, and without waiting for daylight, she fumbled in the desk for a pen and for a bit of the stationery of the Sanitary Commission to which Dr. Howe was attached. You will find the resulting manu-

script in the Congressional Library. Or at least you will unless, like the Declaration of Independence and Magna Charta. it already has been removed to a place of safe keeping for the duration of the war.

Of the many who learned the new words to the old tune from their first appearance in the Atlantic was a man named McCabe-fighting chaplain of the 122d Ohio. He memorized every verse before he put the magazine down. McCabe was taken prisoner at Winchester, and that she had wrought some magic, Mrs. Howe may have realized for the first time when, after his release. Chaplain McCabe described to a huge audience in Washington his adventures in Libby Prison.

In particular he told of the night when a Negro smuggled in the news of Gettysburg, and all the jubilant prisoners sang the "Battle Hymn." On the platform in Washington that night, McCabe cut loose with the song once more. As Mrs. Howe's daughters, in a life of their mother, told the story years later, "the effect was magical, people shouted, wept and sang, all together, and when the song was ended, above the tumult of applause was heard the voice of Abraham Lincoln, exclaiming, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, 'Sing it again!' "

As a fledgling reporter on the New York Times, I saw Mrs. Howe when she took part in some ceremony on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House in September, 1910. She had been 91 in May of that year and only recently I heard of a message she sent on her 90th birthday to a friend of hers. It was a jaunty message of only seven words, and I can't get them out of my mind. These were the words:

"I march to the brave music still."

Thus the author of the Battle Hymn anxious American heart. She marched to the brave music still. Do we? Do If, on that occasion, the flyers did not Hotel, Mrs. Howe could see the watch- caten at the words before they fled. we? This year-and next-will provide